

## WHY CLUBS?

Have you ever thought about joining a club but didn't because you were already too busy with schoolwork and family? Maybe you thought to yourself, "That sounds like a lot of fun, but I don't have the time to do that, too." Don't make up your mind too quickly because clubs have a lot to offer. In addition to the social benefits of a club, participating in clubs can help you achieve your future goals!

Research shows that regular participation in extracurricular activities can have significant benefits for students from general wellness to improved academic achievement. Students who are active members of school clubs benefit in these ways:

- Have higher self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Have lower levels of depression.
- Develop improved decision-making skills.
- Are more likely to receive better grades.
- Are more likely to graduate high school and attend college.

Are you curious about how clubs can do so much more than you thought? There can be more happening in clubs than just getting together after school. This all comes down to the focus of the club and how these clubs can be designed to ensure that students gain the most from this informal setting. While the traditional classroom environment has a lot to offer, clubs can achieve things that a typical class might not have the time for. Clubs provide the opportunity to take what we learn in the normal school day and focus it on a particular topic. When built around specific educational goals, clubs provide an environment that contributes in these ways:

- Help you to develop the interpersonal skills you'll need to work and to get along with a variety of different people.
- Introduce you to the expertise of a specific field, such as when a club focuses on STEM or Art.
- Encourage practicing critical thinking, problem-solving, and persistence as you work to complete club projects.
- Focus a group of students around achieving a specific task, such as producing a play or organizing a fundraiser.

Clubs help with a lot of life skills like effective communication, problem-solving, and project planning. All of these skills are helpful beyond high school and will give you an edge in both college and the workplace. So, if you see a club that sounds interesting, remember that there is a lot to gain from joining in!

